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RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 001265

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PREL](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: TFH01: THE AMBASSADOR AND PRESIDENT ARIAS DISCUSS  
HONDURAN SITUATION

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 1244

[B.](#) TEGUCIGALPA 1231

[C.](#) TEGUCIGALPA 1253

[D.](#) TEGUCIGALPA 1264

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Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens, reasons 1.4 (b & d)

[1](#)1. (S) Summary: The Ambassador and Arias discussed the Honduran situation on December 7. Arias remains committed to a negotiated solution to the Honduran crisis and expressed his willingness to stay engaged and provide leadership. He added that the holding of free and fair elections provides a peaceful path to restore democracy in the nation. He confirmed his invitation to Honduran President-elect Pepe Lobo to visit San Jose on December 8. He believes that Honduras should not be isolated diplomatically, and warns that its destabilization would have negative consequences for all of Central America. Issues on the table in San Jose include the resignation of regime leader Micheletti, the creation of a government of national unity and the need to provide political amnesty for President Zelaya, regime leader Micheletti, and the Honduran military. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (S) The Ambassador spoke to Costa Rican President Arias on the afternoon of December 7 to discuss the situation and review our common diplomatic initiatives in the wake of the November 29 general elections in Honduras and December congressional vote rejecting the restoration of President Zelaya. Arias made clear his total commitment to the restoration of the constitutional and democratic order in Honduras. He noted that his mediation efforts had been singularly devoted to that task -- an objective he had worked closely with the U.S. to achieve. Arias stated that he had also supported the Guaymuras Dialogue, which eventually resulted in the signing of the Tegucigalpa-San Jose Accord (TSJA), a negotiated framework mostly established in the mediation and negotiations held under his auspices last July and August. Arias criticized regime leader Roberto Micheletti for not acting in good faith in terms of his attempt to control the creation of the government of national unity, which ultimately resulted in President Zelaya's

decision to withdraw from the TSJA. The Ambassador pointed out that both the unsigned San Jose Accord and the concluded TSJA provided very concrete terms for resolving the Honduran crisis. Arias agreed that both agreements represented a diplomatic process conducted over many months and involving Hondurans in direct negotiations.

13. (S) Arias expressed the view that the Honduran elections were absolutely vital to the solution of the Honduran crisis.

The Ambassador and Arias agreed that the Honduran elections had been well run by the autonomous Supreme Elections Tribunal resulting in a free, fair and transparent process. Both also agreed that voter turn out had been strong. The Ambassador pointed out that Pepe Lobo had gained an estimate 25 percent more votes than President Zelaya in his winning campaign of 2005. Arias said he had argued strongly at the Ibero-American Summit the previous week in defense of the right of the Honduran people to elect their leaders and had urged other countries to recognize the results. He said he had made the case in the open discussions between the heads of states, as well as in private meetings with Spanish President Zapatero and others, that it was a travesty that these countries should recognize flawed election processes in Iran and Afghanistan and not be willing to recognize a far more credible election held in Honduras. Arias said that beyond the ALBA countries, he noted that Brazil and Argentina had taken a very tough line against Honduras. He added that President Zapatero appeared unduly influenced by President Lula.

14. (S) Arias stressed that it was imperative for Central American leaders to continue to contribute to a solution to the Honduran crisis, since developments in Honduras would have its most direct and significant political and economic impact on its closest neighbors. Arias made clear that he

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planned to stay engaged and provide leadership in this task. Arias confirmed his invitation for President-elect Pepe Lobo to visit San Jose on December 8. He said he conceived the visit of President-elect Lobo as an opportunity to begin to lift the veil of isolation affecting Honduras and give him needed diplomatic space to begin to normalize ties with Central America.

15. (S) On the substance of the visit, Arias noted that he would encourage Lobo to support some political arrangement consistent with the San Jose and TSJA. The Ambassador and Arias agreed that Arias should urge Lobo to press Micheletti to resign and pave the way for the creation of a government of national unity to serve in a transition role until Lobo's inauguration on January 27, 2010. The Ambassador and Arias discussed possible names to fill some of the key ministerial portfolios in a government of national unity. Arias suggested that Liberal Party candidate Elvin Santos could possibly play an important role. He said that Santos had been able to garner 38 percent of the vote in the elections, and had a certain level of credibility and legitimacy. Arias also stressed the importance of going back to the original San Jose Accord's offer of political amnesty to all of the key players in the coup drama, including Zelaya and his closest advisors, Micheletti and regime insiders, and the Honduran military as an institution. Arias stressed that amnesty, as had been the case in the 1980s in Central America, would help facilitate the achievement of national reconciliation.

16. (S) The Ambassador informed Arias that Lobo had told him that following his visit to San Jose, he planned to meet with Martinelli here in Tegucigalpa on Wednesday, December 9, and that he would travel to the Dominican Republic to meet with President Fernandez. Arias expressed concern about Martinelli going to Tegucigalpa since it might send mixed signals, particularly if it is seen as supportive of the Micheletti regime. Arias suggested that it was preferable for Lobo to travel to Panama or that Martinelli travel to San

Jose and that both meet together with Lobo.  
LLORENS